



PITTSFIELD BOARD OF HEALTH

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DATE: April 30, 2009

FROM: James J. Wilusz, R.S., Health Director

**RE: MASSACHUSETTS CONTINUES ITS RESPONSE TO OUTBREAK OF SWINE
FLU**

Dear Community Member,

As you are aware, the United States has confirmed one hundred and nine (109) cases as well as two (2) in the City of Lowell. As of today, the City of Pittsfield has **no confirmed cases** of the Swine Flu.

In an effort to continue working diligently on the prevention of further spread, I want to assure you that the City of Pittsfield in collaboration with State health officials continue to work closely with partners at the federal, state and local level to respond to the swine flu outbreak in the U.S.

The Department of Public Health (DPH) officials continue to take steps to increase surveillance of influenza-like illness in Massachusetts, asking health care providers and hospital emergency departments to be on the lookout for flu-like symptoms -- especially in people who have recently traveled to Mexico or any of the U.S. states which have confirmed cases. If a provider suspects a patient may be infected with swine flu, DPH as well as local public health officials request that they perform and submit a swab test for laboratory testing.

Even though there have been only two cases identified in Massachusetts, there are steps that everyone can take to prevent getting or spreading any type of influenza and we need your help to combat this public health issue:

- wash your hands often with soap and water or with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- cough or sneeze into a tissue or into your elbow instead of into your hands;
- and if you're sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to avoid infecting them.

For general information on swine flu and the status of the nationwide outbreak, visit www.cdc.gov/swineflu. For more information on the Massachusetts response, and [how to care for someone at home who has the flu](#), please visit www.mass.gov/dph.

Attached is a public health fact sheet regarding the Swine Flu, an informational sheet regarding the State 2-1-1 hotline, as well as a list of resources to assist you in your concerns and questions.

Thank you for your cooperation in the matter.